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**INFORMATION REPORT**

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia  
SUBJECT Povazske Strojarny

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1. The national enterprise at Povazska Bystrica (Q50/071) has had a variety of names since 1945: Povazske Strojarny (Vah Region Machine Works); Manin, Povazska Bystrica; Enterprise of Klement Gottwald. The last is the most recent official name. The plant employs approximately 7,500 workers and is engaged in the production of ammunition of all kinds, electric refrigerators, Manet motorcycles, wire, sheets of non-ferrous metal, and pipe.
2. The buildings are single story, concrete structures having flat roofs with sky-lights. They were all built between 1929 and 1938 except the wire-working shop which was built during 1942. In general, the machine equipment is good. The equipment in the foundry and that for producing priming caps and motorcycles may be called very good.
3. Light arms ammunition of the following calibers can be produced: 6.5mm, 7.0mm, 7.5mm, 7.65mm \*, and 7.92mm. At present, the 7.92mm Mauser-type cartridge \*\* is the principal ammunition being produced. The factory is equipped with sixteen ammunition production lines with a capacity of about 40 million cartridges per month. However, after the war eight of these lines were dismantled and stored to make room for the production of motorcycles. Equipment for producing rifles was also removed to make room for the manufacture of refrigerators. Until 1949, domestic orders for ammunition amounted to approximately 120 million rounds of rifle ammunition, 60 million rounds of pistol ammunition and 280,000 medium caliber artillery shells per year. Some orders were also filled for export

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4. The machines for the production of ammunition are of German (Zerner, Karlsruhe), French and Czech (Zbrojovka and Skoda) makes. However, there is no danger of a lack of replacements since all the drawings are available in the CSR. Skoda has drawings of a machine for controlling the weight of cartridges which is very efficient and precise. The degree to which the production of ammunition is an automatic process is about the same as that in the United States. Because of a shortage of copper, the plant is also set up to produce steel shell casings. Before they are pressed into shape, the steel cups are parkerized (surface coated with phosphate).

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5. The equipment for the rolling of non-ferrous metals was originally designed to supply the needs of the ammunition department. There is a triple mill or "trio" for rolling warm metals to a width of 1.5 meters. There are also five double mills or "duos" for the further cold-rolling of sheets to a minimum thickness of 0.08 mm. Povazska Bystrica is not equipped for the production of foil. Some alterations have been made on the "trio" to enable the rolling of aluminum sheets of good quality (dural) for airplanes. Nevertheless, the present width of the "trio" is too small and another with a width of 2.5 meters is planned. A new project for the rolling of larger aluminum airplane parts is still in the planning stages. A wire-working shop and a pipe shop have been added to the sheet metal shop. The pipe shop has three presses, the largest of which is a Schloeman press having a maximum pressure of 2,500 tons. Pipe as well as various profiles are pressed from copper, brass and aluminum in this shop.
6. The wire-working shop is not yet completed. At present, wire bars (virebary) are processed warm on an improvised rolling mill into wire of 8 mm diameter. The fine wire shop then draws this into wire of various diameters ranging down to 0.008mm. This wire drawing equipment is of German make, "Juwel". Additional machines for wire drawing are now being designed and are intended to form the auxiliary program of the tool shop at Povazska Bystrica. Powerful wire drawing equipment is also to be manufactured at Turciansky Sv. Martin (Q50/C69).
7. The foundry at Povazska Bystrica is equipped with sixteen induction furnaces for the melting of copper and brass for further casting into blocks and bars. For the casting of bars of special alloys, the Swiss Gerderlin method has been introduced whereby the hot metal is cast on a centrifugal machine into circles which are later straightened when cold. The founding of aluminum is handled on six cold-chamber die-casting machines which use the Polak system. Parts for motorcycles and refrigerators as well as for milk cans are made here. The iron foundry has four induction furnaces used in making castings for cylinder heads and bodies for motorcycles and compressors.
8. The plant is equipped with hydraulic, eccentric and spindle presses for the production of artillery shells. There are about twenty small presses for shells 80mm and under, ten to fifteen presses for shells of 100 mm to 150 mm, and four large presses for shells up to 300mm. The large presses can also handle shell casings from 305mm to 420 mm. This department also manufactures milk cans (about four quart size) at the rate of about 200,000 a year.
9. The equipment for the production of motorcycles has a capacity of 30,000 per year. The program for 1950 calls for the manufacture of 12,000 Manet models which have double-cycle, single cylinder, double piston engines with a 92 cubic centimeter cylinder capacity. All the components for these motorcycles are made at the Povazska Bystrica plant. A conveyor belt system is used for assembling the motorcycles. Modern drilling machines with up to twelve spindles were delivered in 1947 from the factory in Kurim (P50/H31). Gears are made on modern Swiss machines, built by Maag.
10. Refrigerator production is similarly set up on an assembly line basis. The yearly production is 50,000 to 60,000 units (5 to 6 cu. ft. size), and all the components except the electric motors are produced at Povazska Bystrica. Bellows, needed in the production of refrigerators and thermostats, have recently been put in production. Formerly, bellows needed by the CSR were imported from Switzerland and England at a cost of about seven million Kcs per year. The quality of refrigerators produced by Povazska Bystrica is being improved, but the experts who were working on this have gradually been discharged for political reasons.

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11. The plant was originally set up with a capacity for the production of 400 rifles per day. However, as in the case of ammunition production, this equipment was put aside to make room for the machining of parts for refrigerators and motorcycles. The tool shop has sufficient equipment to produce and maintain tools used in the production of rifles and ammunition. However, with the switch to the production of refrigerators and motorcycles, tools must be ordered from places like Zbrojovka Brno and Skoda. This is particularly true in the procurement of such things as measuring instruments and steel dies used in press casting.
12. The management of the national enterprise at Povazska Bystrica is located in the administration building of the plant. After the reorganization in 1949, plants at Stara Tura (P49/T26), Bratislava (Goerz optical factory) and Myjava (P49/T26) were removed from the control of Povazska Bystrica. For twelve years prior to the coup this plant was run by Engineer Kubik. He has been transferred to Kosice (P49/T34) as punishment for not being an active Communist. The new manager is Cernusak, an old-time Communist who was formerly an administrative employee at Trnava (P49/T22). He has no knowledge of the needs of the factory, but he is diligent and honest. None of the skilled personnel still employed at the plant is a convinced Communist even though some may have party membership cards. Only small factories at Velka Bytca (Q50/082), Hrabove (Q50/082) and Zilina (Q50/092) are subordinated to this management.
13. The military importance of this plant is considerable, particularly with regard to the production of small arms ammunition for which the plant has the largest productive capacity in the CSR. About 40 percent of the capacity is represented by the firm Sellier & Bellot at Vlasim (Q50/114). The Povazska Bystrica plant was not bombed during the war and it is well protected by the surrounding terrain, by the curves in the Vah River valley, and by fog in the valley. Attempts to make artificial fog in the area of the plant have been successful.
14. During 1946 and 1947 the Ministry of National Defense protested against the reduction of arms production capacity, but the Ministry could not give the factory enough work to do. Through political pressure, the workers succeeded in having the production switched to motorcycles and refrigerators. With the changed conditions in 1948, the Ministry was able to place some orders which, along with the order for export, were easily filled even with the reduced capacity. At present, however, the Ministry of National Defense is exerting considerable pressure to have the plant reconverted to full-time munitions production. Since the production of arms, heavy machinery and ball bearings are directly subordinated to the central administration in Prague, plans for these changes in production are being kept secret. Engineer Novotny, present general manager for the Directorate of Precision Machinery, is leading this movement for the return to arms production. In the summer of 1949, Novotny stated that the Povazska Bystrica plant would be completely reconverted to arms production by the end of 1950, and further that an automatic pistol and a new 30 mm anti-aircraft gun would be produced.\*\*\* The production of an automatic pistol has been started at Zbrojovka in Strakonice (U50/Q49), but the development of the anti-aircraft gun has not been completed. At present there are no other suitable buildings for housing the motorcycle and refrigerator production. Construction of additional buildings (at least 20,000 square meters of floor space would be necessary) would require two to three years. The possibilities of moving this production to Trencin (P49/T58), Tovarniky (P49/T65) or to Zlate Moravce (Q49/T83) have been considered, but none of these plans had reached any real form by the end of 1949.
15. One of the small factories now being managed from Povazske Bystrica is a former furniture factory in Velka Bytca (Q50/082) where 400 workers are employed. Using equipment from the confiscated Masi factory moved from

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Cheb (U51/P37), it is producing meter sticks, tape measures and rulers. The moving of the production of drawing instruments from Bratislava to this factory is planned.

16. The second small plant under Povazske Bystrica management was built in 1947 in Hrabove (Q50/082) and had been intended for the production of automobiles. The plant was nationalized in 1948 and now employs about 30 workers. It will probably serve as an auxiliary to the main plant for the production of parts.
17. The third is a small plant which produces electric motors (up to 0.5 KW) located in Zilina (Q50/092), employing about 50 workers. It will probably be moved to Hrabove.

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- \* [ ] Comment: Not interchangeable with American 30.06 ammunition.
- \*\* [ ] Comment: European nomenclature for this type of ammunition is "S-cartridge".
- \*\*\* [ ] Comment: It is difficult to judge whether this plan was real or a product of Novotny's imagination.